

WOMEN, INFANTS AND CHILDREN SERVICES BRANCH

Family Health Services Division

Department of Health

Request For Information (RFI) No. 2006-1

INTRODUCTION

Reason for the RFI

The State of Hawaii Department of Health (DOH), Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) invites participation in this RFI. WIC is specifically interested in requesting an expression of interest to provide WIC services.

Overview

The national Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for WIC was established, because surveys found substantial numbers of low-income pregnant and postpartum women, infants and young children, from families with inadequate income, to be at special risk with respect to their physical and mental health by reason of inadequate nutrition and/or health care.

The WIC Program provides income eligible pregnant, breastfeeding and non-breastfeeding postpartum women, infants, and children under five (5) years of age at nutritional risk with specific supplemental foods, nutrition education and counseling, breastfeeding support and promotion, health and social service referrals. Approximately 33,000 participants are issued benefits monthly. Services are provided through 16 Local Agencies (LAs) on six islands (Oahu, Hawaii, Maui, Molokai, Lanai and Kauai). There are seven (7) State-run LAs (Honolulu, Leeward, Wahiawa, Windward, Hilo/Kona, Kauai and Maui) and nine (9) Purchase of Service (POS) LAs (Kalihi-Palama, Kapiolani Medical Center, Kokua Kalihi Valley, Lanai Community Hospital, Waimanalo Health Center, Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center, Bay Clinic, Na Puuwai and Community Clinic of Maui) statewide. Services are provided at these clinics and satellite sites throughout the State.

Purpose

The purpose of the WIC Program is to provide at no cost to participants, specific supplemental foods; information on and support for breastfeeding including the loan of electric breast pumps; distribution of manual breast pumps, nutrition education and individualized counseling to meet each individual's dietary needs and address specific nutritional risks; anemia screening and health and social service referrals to categorically eligible women who are pregnant, women who are breastfeeding up to one (1) year postpartum or non-breastfeeding up to six (6) months postpartum; infants under one (1) year of age; and young children up to five (5) years of age; and found to be at nutritional risk in Hawaii.

Authority

The WIC Program is authorized by Section 17 of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, as amended through Public Law 108-265, June 30, 2004. Services must be performed in accordance with the current Hawaii WIC State Plan and the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 246, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). USDA provides Federal funds to the DOH Family Health Services Division, WIC Services Branch as the designated State Agency (SA). The DOH has administered the Hawaii WIC Program since 1976 and funds LAs throughout the State to deliver services. No State funding is provided.

Goals and Objectives

The SA is committed to provide WIC Program services to as many eligible persons living in this state as possible, in an efficient and cost-effective manner through a network of public and private local service providers, at no cost to participants. The WIC Program is designed to protect and/or improve the health and nutritional status of as many eligible low-income women, infants and children. The goals and objectives include: improved birth outcomes and savings in health care; improved diet and health; improved infant feeding practices through breastfeeding; improved immunization rates and access to regular source of medical care; improved cognitive development; reduction of obesity; and improved pre-conceptual nutritional status.

Description of the Target Population to be Served

The SA projects that there may be 42,000 persons statewide, who are eligible for WIC services. 41% infants and children from 0-4 years of age live in households with less than 185% of the federal poverty level (FPL). Of this number of persons with incomes below the 185% of poverty, 75% may be infants and children up to five (5) years of age, and 25% may be women who are pregnant, breastfeeding or not breastfeeding.

The target population of the WIC Program must reside in the State of Hawaii, must be categorically and income eligible and have a nutritional risk. Pregnant, breastfeeding (up to one year postpartum), and non-breastfeeding (up to six months postpartum) women, infants, and children up to five (5) years of age are categorically eligible. The word pregnant shall be defined as women determined to have one (1) or more embryos or fetuses in utero. Income-eligibility is set at 185% of the FPL; those eligible for the Food Stamp Program, Medicaid/QUEST, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families or Temporary Assistance for Other Needy Families and foster children are adjunctively income-eligible. Nutritional risk can be medically based, i.e., anemia, poor growth, underweight, maternal age, history of pregnancy complications or poor pregnancy outcomes, substance abuse or diet-based, i.e., inadequate or inappropriate dietary patterns that may impair or endanger health. Risk factors may also include being homeless or a foster child. Applicants upon certification become WIC participants who are eligible to receive supplemental foods or food instruments (FIs).

Geographic Coverage of Service

This service is to be provided statewide on all the islands of Oahu, Hawaii, Maui, Molokai, Kauai and Lanai, pending availability of federal funding. Service providers include State-run LAs on Kauai, Maui, Hilo/Kona, and Windward, Leeward, Honolulu and Wahiawa areas on the

island of Oahu as well as POS providers on Maui, Lanai, Molokai, and the Keaau-Kau area on the island of Hawaii and Waianae, Kalihi, Kalihi Valley and Waimanalo areas on the island of Oahu. Table 1 depicts the level of service that is currently being provided by POS LAs along with service gap areas identified with an asterisk (*) where WIC requests an expression of interest. The current provider for the Honolulu area outside Kalihi and Kalihi Valley may not bid for WIC services. Potentially, parts of Kauai and Maui could be serviced by POS LAs.

Table 1

POS Monthly Average Caseload by Island/Area			
Island	Area	Current Caseload	Projected Caseload
Kauai	To be specified*		500
Oahu	Waianae-Ewa	4325	
	Haleiwa-Laie-Hauula*		875
	Waimanalo	800	
	Honolulu/Kalihi Valley	1600	
	Honolulu/Kalihi Palama	2900	
	Honolulu/Waikiki-Kapahulu-McCully*	1900	
Maui	Kahului-Wailuku	1150	
	Lahaina*		350
	Hana*		125
Lanai		100	
Molokai		350	
Big Island	Keaau-Kau	1450	

Funding priority consideration will be given to geographic areas with identified underserved eligible populations to applicants that provide integrated and comprehensive ongoing pediatric and obstetric care. The SA will consider the following priority system in the selection of LA/provider. First consideration is given to a public or private nonprofit health agency that provides ongoing, routine pediatric and obstetric care and administrative services. Second consideration is given to a public or private nonprofit health or human service agency that enters into a written agreement with another agency for either ongoing, routine pediatric and obstetric care or administrative services. Third consideration is given to a public or private nonprofit health agency that enters into a written agreement with private physicians licensed by the State, in order to provide ongoing, routine pediatric and obstetric care to a specific category of participants. Fourth consideration is given to a public or private nonprofit human service agency that enters into a written agreement with private physicians licensed by the State, to provide ongoing routine pediatric and obstetric care. Fifth consideration is given to a public or private nonprofit health or human service agency that provides referrals for ongoing routine pediatric and obstetric care.

More details about the program can be found at www.hawaiiwic.com. Please contact WIC for service specifications on certification, supplemental foods, nutrition education, management requirements, reimbursements, staffing and facility requirements.

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

If respondents believe that portions of their RFI response should remain confidential, respondents shall clearly identify that portion of their response they wish to maintain as confidential and include a statement detailing the reasons that the information should not be disclosed. Such reasons shall include specific harm or prejudice that may arise. The WIC Services Branch Chief shall determine whether the identified information should remain confidential. A prior notice shall be provided to the respondent should any information which was requested to be confidential become a part of public distribution/information.

COST OF RESPONSE

The Department will not reimburse any respondent for the cost of preparing and submitting a response to this RFI.

OPTIONAL PARTICIPATION

Participation in this RFI is voluntary and does not require a response to any subsequent procurement action by WIC. Participation in this RFI process is optional and is not required in order to respond to any subsequent procurement. Neither WIC nor any interested party responding has any obligation under the RFI. WIC reserves the right to incorporate in the RFP, when issued, for such a contract, any recommendations received in response to this RFI.

CONTACT

If there are any questions or clarifications to this RFI, please contact Mr. Michael Nakaji at (808) 586-8190 or toll-free from the neighbor islands at 1-888-820-5425.

RESPONSE SUBMISSION

The WIC Services Branch would appreciate a response by close of business October 6, 2006, preferably via electronic mail to michael.nakaji@ doh.hawaii.gov. However, responses by mail or delivery are acceptable to:

WIC Services Branch
Attention: Contracts Unit
235 S. Beretania Street, Suite 701
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 .